

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are pending. Claim 1 is amended.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments:

(a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; (c) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments and a new reference identified in the Final Rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

In paragraph 3, on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) reference U.S. Patent No. 5,619,036 to Salvio et al. ("Salvio") taken with IDS reference EP 0751040 to Furuta et al. ("Furuta") and with U.S. Patent No. 3,784,970 to Simpkin. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants' claim 1 calls for an apparatus for watching around the vehicle, the apparatus mounted thereon, the apparatus comprising an image pickup unit, having a reflective portion and an imaging portion, for picking up an image to a left side and a right side at the front of the vehicle, the image pick-up unit fitted to an opening of a grille formed outside a vehicular radiator with respect to a vehicle operator, only the reflective portion of the image pick-up unit extending beyond the grille; a display unit for displaying the image, the display unit provided in the vehicle; a control unit for processing the image to enable the vehicle operator to control movement of the vehicle based on the displayed image; and a warning unit coupled to the control unit and transmitting a warning signal to user of another vehicle. The combination discloses no such thing.

Applicants' invention provides two advantages with its positioning, the advantages being complementary to one another rather than being mutually exclusive as found in the references.

In particular, the invention allows the operator of the vehicle to see to both sides and detect any dangerous condition to either side at the front of the vehicle when the operator direct view is obstructed. This capability is provided without deteriorating the appearance of the vehicle as the detecting element has a small portion, which provides or gathers the image, protruding beyond the grille at which it is mounted. As such, the invention provides for safety but does not deteriorate the aesthetic appearance of the vehicle. The proposed combination does not do so.

Salvio, as discussed in the Amendment filed February 25, 2005, discloses a night vision camera for vehicles and the mounting thereof. The Salvio device is solely oriented to the front of the vehicle to allow an operator to see at an increased distance at night using infrared technology (see col. 1, lines 21-26 for the problems being addressed). That is, Salvio is concerned with a driver driving at speeds that outdrive the range of vision afforded by the headlights.

To solve this problem, Salvio mounts a camera between a radiator and a grille of a vehicle (col. 2, lines 35-43). The light that is detected is brought in through a window 18 (Fig. 2) which is well behind the grille and attached, apparently, to portions of the bracket 16 holding the IR camera 14. The window is covered by a door assembly 40 that can be opened or closed based upon the needs of the driver. Thus, there is nothing in Salvio concerned with picking up an image to the right or the left of the vehicle and there is nothing fitted to an opening of the grille formed outside the vehicle radiator.

Simpkin is only applied for disclosing a vehicle warning system that transmits a directional radio frequency transmission at a predetermined rate (Abstract.) These radio frequency signals are transmitted over a limited azimuth angle in front of the vehicle.

Alternatively the transmitter station may be located along a road with a directional antenna shaped and positioned to fix the desired transmission area across the selected portion of the road (col. 2, lines 50-57). The system is intended to overcome the problem of hearing the sirens of emergency vehicles that may be masked by environmental noise or conditions in the vehicle to which the warning must be given. Thus, the warning system is directionally specific. However, Simpkin says nothing about any sort of a detection system.

Newly added reference to Furuta is directed to a device for checking lateral views at the front or rear ends of the vehicle and discloses mounting a box to the bumper at either a center, right, or left corner. In the case of the detection device being mounted to the front of the vehicle, it is mounted to the front bumper forward of the grille in its entirety. This is because of the structure of the device, which includes a series of mirrors to provide reflective surfaces, and the paths taken by the light beams. As can be seen in Fig. 5a, the detecting, or light pickup, lens 21 is mounted in the recess of the bent reflecting first mirror 15. Although this minimizes the space for the detection device, it means the entire device is mounted on the bumper thereby providing an esthetically displeasing protrusion of some sort. There is no disclosure of mounting such to the grille.

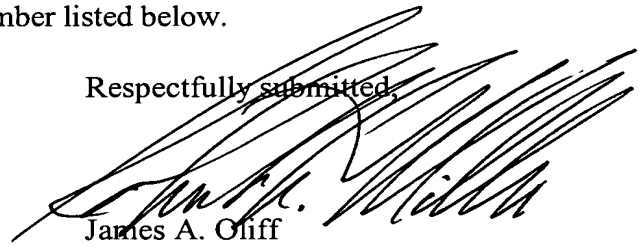
Further, in neither Furuta nor Salvio is there any suggestion or motivation to combine the two devices. Salvio is solely concerned with detecting images to the front at a greater distance than can be illuminated by headlights. The goal is to protect the driver when overdriving the headlights at night. There is no indication in Salvio of any concern with images to either side because of the distances involved. Thus, there is no reason to move the Salvio device forward. As to the Furuta device, because of its structure, it must be mounted exclusively and totally in a fully exposed position to provide the necessary lateral views. Thus, there is no suggestion to pull it back into or behind the grille as is done by Salvio. As such,

there is nothing to suggest the combination. Therefore, it is respectfully requested the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-3 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: June 24, 2005

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